

Drug addiction is emerging as a problem in Jordan

By Serene R. Farraj
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN, Jan. 30--"The phenomenon of drug use and abuse is becoming a serious problem in Jordan, and it will certainly increase if we don't act to prevent it from spreading widely in our society," Dr. Fawzi Dawoud, Director of the Counselling Center at the Jordan University said in an interview here yesterday.

"The dangerous element is that we respond to human problems by providing the people with chemical solutions, instead of looking for human solutions. For example, patients who suffer from maladjustment need counselling more than anything else, yet doctors prescribe to them a certain kind of drug, an easy solution to the problem," he added.

An exploratory study has been conducted by Dr. Dawoud concerning the use and abuse of drugs in Jordan. "This study serves as baseline data for future studies on this problem," Dr. Dawoud said.

The study was conducted to answer many questions raised regarding the problem of drug dependency in Jordan, such as: the expectations and estimates of workers in the medical field concerning the development of this phenomenon; the extent of drug dependency in Jordan; the most common drugs used or abused; geographic distribution of cases; dependency on particular drugs; whether there is any relationship between medical practices and drug use or abuse; the distribution of drug dependency according to age, sex, and profession; and finally the sources of drugs.

As for the method used in conducting the study, Dr. Dawoud said: "Because of the difficulty of reaching the population of drug dependents in Jordan and of taking a sample from the general population, it was decided that the sample should consist of 470 persons, chosen from people directly involved in drug use and distribution such as physicians, pharmacists, school directors and counsellors, and persons in key positions at the Ministry of Health.

In answer to a questionnaire 77 per cent of the physicians, and 79 per cent of the pharmacists said

they thought the phenomenon of drug use constituted a problem, and that this problem would increase in the future. Although there are laws to limit and control drug use, 41 per cent of the physicians and 50 per cent of the pharmacists said that these laws and regulations were not applied and do not serve the purpose for which they were made.

Dr. Dawoud said: "The Department of Drug Prevention and Enforcement had made an estimate of 1882 cases of drug dependency (on hashish and opium) between 1970-1976, 90 per cent of them on hashish, but this is only an estimate; it does not reflect the exact number, which is certainly higher." Four hundred and twenty one cases of drug dependency were reported by those questioned in the study. This number is an indication of the danger of the problem threatening our society.

The study also indicates that the problem is increasing with the passage of time. For example, 23 cases of drug dependency were reported by those questioned for the period 1970-1971, while in 1976-1978 the number of cases reported reached 297.

Tranquillizers were found to be the most common or popular drugs because doctors believe they are safe. Narcotics, which include morphine, heroin and cocaine were the next most common drugs in use: then barbiturates which include psychosedatives (Valium, Equanil and Milton); then stimulants, which include marijuana, LSD, and cocaine.

The study illustrated that males were more dependent on drugs than females. The study revealed that 64 per cent of the cases were of male drug dependence, and 36 per cent were females. "This could raise several questions," Dr. Dawoud said: "Is the female more protected culturally in our society; is it difficult for the female to follow different patterns of behaviour in her request for drugs; how long will this cultural protection last, when we see that women are becoming very active in our society?"

The tendency of drug use and abuse among the youth is as strong as it is in western countries. The

study revealed that 46 per cent or 193 cases depended on tranquilizers, 106 of these cases were below 20 years of age. "This indicates that drugs have entered the youth population, which makes it a must for us to think of effective prevention methods," Dr. Dawoud said.

Concerning the distribution of drug dependence according to occupation, it was found that the highest number were students above 28 per cent or 117 cases; free business, 16 per cent; workers in the medical field, 13 per cent; government employees, 10 per cent; workers, 10 per cent; army officers, 2 per cent; unemployed, 5 per cent; unknown professions, 15 per cent.

It was found that physicians and pharmacists constitute an important source for drugs in addition to illegal smuggling. Dr. Dawoud continued: "Until now efforts were only directed towards smuggling, without taking into consideration the danger of medical abuse. Therefore attention must be paid to medical drug abuse while carrying out our preventive methods, for we must learn from the West that when illegal sources are banned, medical drug abuse increases."

Dr. Dawoud added that doctors and pharmacists must be made better aware of the consequences of drugs, and their effect on human behaviour.

"We must not concentrate our laws and regulations on illegal smuggling only. We need a more integrated approach to prevention, we need specialised centers for treatment, because our medical hospitals are not equipped for treating such problems, problems that need counselling more than anything else," he said.

"It is important to note the necessity of establishing a medical data center before adopting any preventive method, to help us in defining the cases of drug dependency in Jordan. Any protective method must aim at limiting supply through administrative, executive and security measures, and demand through educational and psychological awareness campaigns," he concluded.

ECONOSCOPE

A nomination and a query

By Jawad Ahmad

I: The Central Bank of Jordan has recently announced that it will give two JD 500 prizes each for the best economic research, and the best journalistic economic report. It goes without saying that the prizes will only be given to publications concerning Jordan.

II: This is an altogether different issue, and even wonders whether it is wise to raise it. I do not mean to be critical, just curious.

I often admire the insight of some economic policy-makers. This often comes in the decisions they make.

However, when their knowledge is put to the test, it does not stretch very far. I often admire the insight of some economic policy-makers. This often comes in the decisions they make.

The question is: if top policy-makers good economic decisions relying on theory rather than theoretical knowledge, then the use of learning theory?

If someone makes a decision which is not the norm, he is accused of being a maverick, a maverick. Yet if someone makes a decision without having a basic knowledge of economics, he is discarded as an intruder, then serve as a license to enter the club is all.



The new Upper House holds its first meeting in Amman

New Upper House holds first session

AMMAN, Jan. 30 (JNA)--The new Upper House of Parliament held its first session today under the chairmanship of its speaker Mr. Bahjat Talhouni. During the session Mr. Sa'd Jum'a was elected first deputy spokesman of

the legal, financial and foreign affairs committees. It has been agreed that the House will hold permanent sessions once a month, starting at the end of February.

The new officers were authorized to meet Saturday to nominate

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Not tame anymore

Israel is clearly having problems with its Arabs. The Arab population living inside the pre-1967 borders has been adding its voice to the accelerated struggle against Zionist expansionism which is manifesting itself anew in the occupied territories.

Organisations such as the National Progressive Movement have emerged to join hands with the forceful displays of unity which are occurring everywhere in the Arab World in response to the Egyptian-Israeli treaty machinations.

The Israelis have predictably replied to this wave of nationalist feeling with a wave of arrests and crackdowns, particularly against students, and by re-introducing the tactic of blowing up houses of "suspicious" Arab civilians in the West Bank.

There is also more than enough evidence that Israel--frustrated by the failure of its attempt to impose a final solution of the Palestinian problem through the legal mechanism of the Camp David accords, and alarmed by the shifts in the balance of power in the region--is looking for a way to deflect responsibility for its own intransigence by drawing the Arabs into a new pattern of violence.

And it appears that Lebanon has been chosen once again as the target of Israel's bloody manipulations. The Lebanese authorities have uncovered an Israeli conspiracy in connection with the murder in Beirut of the PLO security chief, Abu Hassan, and have arrested two foreigners with fake passports in the case.

This is by no means the first time the Israelis have used such tactics to create excuses for renewed acts of aggression. With Mr. Begin's reputation now so low among his erstwhile Western backers over his obstinacy in the peace talks, he obviously feels it is time to excite a new wave of sympathy in the world for "embattled" Israel. There are indications in Beirut that the order for Abu Hassan's assassination came from the Prime Minister's office itself.

As usual in these matters, Israel will reap what it sows. But it should take note that the Arabs it is confronting this time--even those once-intimidated subjects within its own borders--are no longer prepared to take provocation lying down, or to see their hopes and dreams for peace and justice trampled forever under the Zionist jackboot.

ARAB PRESS COMMENTARY

Under the heading "The only Practical Answer" AL RAY's editorial Tuesday says the decisions that can be reached by the Syrian-Iraqi Joint Higher Committee would lead to substantial alteration in the balance of power in the Middle East.

Naturally, such an eventuality would not be accepted by Israel and its allies due to the fact that Israel and its supporters are concentrating on dissecting the Arab ranks and dissipating the Arab Nation's energies in side channels that bleed out its capabilities and make it unable to face not only the aggression but also the plans aimed at liquidating the Palestine issue and the very Arab existence.

Welcoming the creation of a unified state between Syria and Iraq the newspaper urges that the two countries should make a thorough study of their unification steps, taking into account the potential threats that may act towards aborting such a unity as did happen in previous inter-Arab unitary efforts.

AL DUSTOUR takes issue with a statement attributed to the Indian Prime Minister Morarji Desai calling on the Arabs to relinquish the desire to destroy Israel which he considers a reality that cannot be reversed.

Expressing its astonishment at Mr. Desai's surprise statement, the newspaper says the Indian leader made his call at a time when Israel was occupying vast tracts of land belonging to three Arab countries, carrying out savage incursions into South Lebanon and denying the existence of the Palestinian people and their right to self-determination as well as refusing peace enshrined in the Camp David agreements which are far below the relevant international resolutions!

Mr. Desai's pronouncements appear to indicate that he is living in another world completely, the newspaper says.

WHAT'S GOING ON

American Film

The American Centre is showing two films today, the first at 6:00 p.m. and the second at 8:15 p.m. The films are Stanley Kramer's "Inherit the Wind" and John Ford's "The Informer," showing in that order.

Theatre

The Amman Players present excerpts from Neil Simon's "Plaza Suite" combined with a buffet dinner at the Jordan International Hotel Ballroom at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are available at the hotel or from members of the American Women's Club.

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Annual chemistry exhibition offers many high school students an opportunity they missed



A smiling secondary student waits to observe one of 52 experiments put on at the University of Jordan's Chemistry Department during the current eight-day exhibition there.

the President of Yarmouk University, will inaugurate the exhibition at Yarmouk at 10 a.m. this Saturday.

Twenty six of the experiments are for the second secondary curriculum, and the other 26 are for third secondary students pre-

paring for the Tawjihiyeh. The students from different schools stay at the exhibition for about 2 hours. Each class breaks into

groups which go from experiment to experiment.

This is the first year that the exhibition has been scheduled to

sum up the programme's value. A lab-full of eager faces bore witness to these words.

Keep those explosions coming!

Attendance is not limited to students sent directly by their schools. Others, especially students who are able to visit the exhibition in groups, are encouraged to do so.

Because girls' schools are often

newer and not as fully equipped as the boys' schools, they are given the longer visiting hours: 8 a.m. to

1 p.m. as opposed to 2 to 5 p.m. for the boys.

Elham Ahmad, a second sec-

ondary student at a comprehen-

sive school who was visit-

ing the exhibition, said: "We've

heard of this equipment and these

experiments, but never seen them—this helps us understand."

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Old is Gold...

By Beata Levy

PARIS—One of the latest investments by a British pension fund is an exciting cross-channel venture into art and antiques. Thanks to the unlikely combination of a Paris department store building becoming vacant, and the British POSSE (Post Office Staff Superannuation Fund) ready with Frs. 140 million to sink into it, the corner block opposite the entrance to the Louvre Museum in the Rue de Rivoli became converted into an attractive Antiques Market.

The project took two years to complete, with an additional Frs. 450 million from an international bank consortium. Today the "Louvre des Antiquaires", a London-type antiques market, is open for business, with every one of its 240 stands fully let on three floors—and crowded most of the day.

For there are no more invertebrate lovers of antiques than the French. Paris has some of the greatest dealers of fine furniture in the world, on the Left Bank and around the Place Vendôme.

At the other end of the scale, its famous flea market has always attracted serious dealers and amateurs.

In between there are 8,000 registered antique businesses—a staggering number compared with Britain's 4,000. What is more, they have been multiplying fast, especially in the provinces, as have antique fairs, now over 150 in number.

All this adds up to a total of Frs. 2 billion worth of antiques changing hands officially in 1977 (compared with Frs. 700 million in 1970).

But saturation point seems nowhere in sight. The new "Louvre des Antiquaires", despite its pompous title, is further whetting the appetite of Parisians. This may be as much due to its layout and convenient location as to an intelligent sales policy which sets out to create confidence.

Unlike most antique shops the world over, a clearly visible price tag accompanies every item on display. This is one of the market's internal rules, another being periodic inspections of the claims made for the merchandise.

A bureau of experts is on the

Even the British, whose taste for antiques is well developed, are cashing in on the antiques boom in France. Not everything that is old is equally valuable, however. French collectors will pay up to Frs. 1,000 for an old postcard, but currently show no interest in 18th century furniture.

spot to authenticate the purchase for Frs. 140,000. In as much as the buyer's request, and to deliver a certificate guaranteeing age and quality. But since errors of judgement are always possible, would-be purchasers are encouraged to take out an insurance policy at a low premium which promises the refund of the purchasing price if the guarantee can be proved wrong.

"The Japanese keep telling me they prefer our market to antique shops because prices here do not shoot up the moment they are showing interest," said the American owner of an Art Nouveau stand.

The "Louvre des Antiquaires" may win back some of the clientele that antique dealers have lost to auctioneers. Many family buyers who used to spend weekends browsing through junk shops are attending auction sales instead. On occasion they pay over the odds at an auction for merchandise they had previously turned down at a dealer's because of distrust and ignorance.

Not all auctioneers are doing well, however. Those who specialise in 18th century furniture are complaining of lack of demand. Interests in firearms is also at a low ebb. Prices for non-figurative modern paintings are refusing to climb back to their pre-1974 high levels.

But innocent lads such as postcard collecting is spreading like wildfire, and are responsible for the increased turnover of one specialised auctioneer from Frs. 6,000 to Frs. 28,000 within six months. The addiction has hit 100,000 Frenchmen, so that Frs. 1,000 is no longer an unusual price to pay for one old postcard.

Silver and jewellery are booming. There is also a strong demand for art from the Middle East, an Iranian manuscript having recently changed hands at a record price of Frs. 720,000.

The president popularity of Art Nouveau explains the new peak reached when a Galle lamp sold,

Financial Times News-Features

for Frs. 1,000 for an old postcard, but currently show no interest in 18th century furniture.

For two centuries the fame of Slutsk

belts has failed to fade away. The best

samples have come into the treasure-

house of world art. 18th century. At that time they were not Slutz (a town in the only a significant part of men's garments, but gradually national motifs, such as a corn-flower, or forget-me-not or other flowers, began to appear in the designs. Weavers of Slutsk learned to make two, and even four faces of various patterns on a single belt. The so-called "cast" belts, the face side of which was interwoven with gold thread covering the silk ground, demanded their special skill.

first, weavers were such belts started in Warsaw, Krakow, and Lublin at the end of 18th century. The skill of Byelorussian weavers, and high quality of their works remains consummate. Works of the masters are exported to East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Finland and Sweden. Weavers of Slutsk "decorate" their belts with gold thread, the face side of which was interwoven with gold thread covering the silk ground, demanded their special skill. Manufacturing of (TASS)

Craftswomen retain skills

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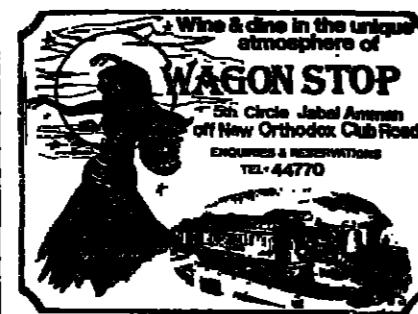


Anna Poleschuk (centre) learned the difficult art of weaving patterned belts from her mother. Now she shares her experience with young people.

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GENERAL TENDENCIES: In the morning you could choose between two points of view, so make up your mind just what you want to do for your best interests. Impress others with your talents.

ARIES (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19) Remove obstacles in the path of your progress so you can get ahead faster. Enjoy the company of good friends in the evening.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 to May 20) Complete outside business matters early in the day and then handle private matters wisely. Think constructively.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) You could have some irritating situations that crop up in the morning but all is fine later in the day. Be logical.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to July 21) Be willing to make personal changes that could give you greater abundance in the future. Avoid the social tonight.

LEO (July 22 to Aug. 21) Keep any promises that are important in the morning and then study exciting new interests that could give you added income.

VIRGO (Aug. 22 to Sept. 22) Complete deals with associates in the morning, then turn to outside matters that are important. Be alert to opportunities.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Handle all that work ahead if you and then make the right outside contacts that are important to your future welfare.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Put those creative ideas to work and impress others. Avoid one who is jealous of you. Be more proud of yourself.

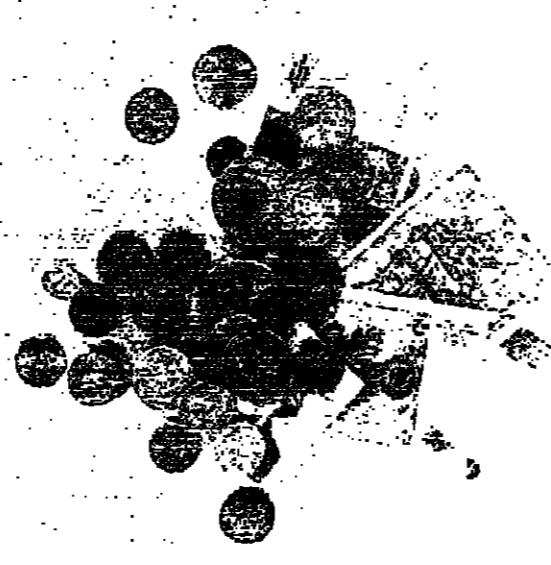
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) A most difficult problem in your line of endeavor can be solved in at this time. Try to please your mate more.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) Make sure that reports and correspondence are correctly handled. A trusted friend can give the advice you need.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) You have to be very careful in the handling of money at this time to carry through with your plans. Strive for happiness.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20) Use care in the handling of personal matters in the morning. Take needed health treatments and improve your appearance.

Coins are cleaner



Where there's muck there's brass, the saying goes, and notes and coins are none too clean either. But Professor Reimer Levelow of West Berlin's Federal Health Authority has made a bacteriological survey of money from West Germany and neighbouring countries and says the health hazard is exaggerated. He found fungi on three per cent of coins and 30 per cent of notes, but claimed there is no health risk if food is handled by a cashier who also handles money.

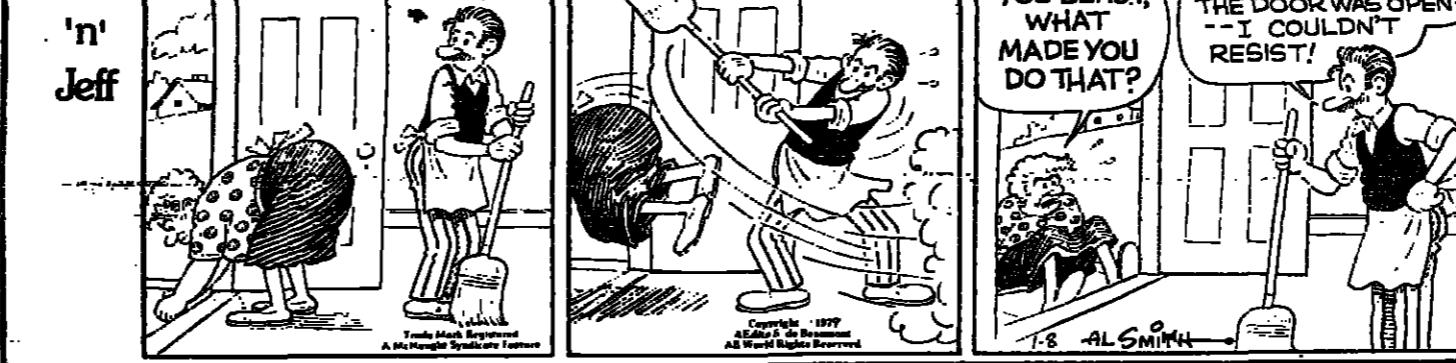
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt 'n' Jeff



Flintstones



JUMBLE THAT SCRABLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SINOE

ORPEN

RANCLE

MULVLE



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

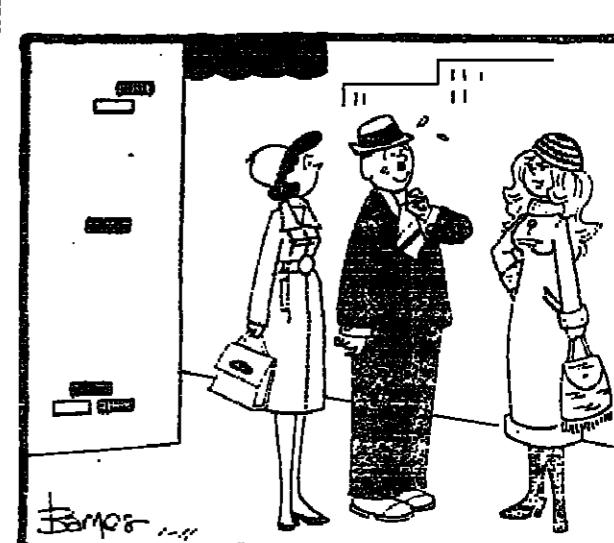
Print answer here: IN " " (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles MOSSY HARPY BASKET EIGHTY

Answer: The best kind of beef to serve a minister — "PRIME" (prime minister)

THE BETTER HALF

By Bar



"Why, Mr. Parker, how sweet of you to remember me! I was in that big cake at the stag party the other night!"

THE Daily Crossword

by Frank R. Jackson

ACROSS

- 1 Belfry
- 3 Dines
- 5 Lovable
- 8 Summ
- 10 French
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U.N. resolution on trade gives support to developing nations

UNITED NATIONS, Jan. 30 (R) — Despite negative votes from the United States, Canada and the nine European Common Market countries, the General Assembly approved a resolution yesterday calling for reform of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The resolution, which passed by 110 to 11 with 11 abstentions, emphasised the rights of developing countries in any changes made to the international trade regime.

The North American and EEC countries did not detail the objections which prompted their "no" votes, but they apparently disapproved of changes mentioned in the resolution, including special treatment for developing countries.

The resolution said that any new codes or rules in negotiations affecting developing countries' trade should not be adopted without full participation and acceptance by those countries.

The assembly also urged all participants in multilateral trade negotiations to assess jointly the impact of the 1973 Tokyo declaration concerning additional benefits to developing countries and to take corrective measures as necessary.

The assembly called on developed states to abide by

agreements reached in the 1973 Tokyo declaration, especially concerning principles of reciprocity in trade relations between developed and developing countries.

The resolution said that reflects the substantial reduction and eventual abolition of tariff and non-tariff restrictions against the trade of developing countries, removal of discriminatory and escalatory barriers against them, and improvement in the operation of the generalised system of preferences to provide wider coverage and deeper cuts in tariffs.

U.N. budget

The General Assembly also approved the United Nations' first

Ford Foundation appoints first black president

NEW YORK, Jan. 30 (R) — The Ford Foundation, one of the country's most powerfully private philanthropic agencies, has appointed as president lawyer Frank Thomas, the first black to hold the job.

Mr. Thomas, 43, gained national prominence between 1967 and 1977 as head of the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation which cleared up Brooklyn slum areas. Under his leadership the privately and publicly funded corporation became a national model of how to put a dingy, neglected neighbourhood on the road to prosperity.

In 1977, he was elected to the board of trustees of the Ford Foundation, which was started in 1936 by Henry Ford and his son Edsel.

Mr. Thomas takes up his new position directing the multi-billion dollar foundation on June 1. Selected from among more than 300 candidates, he will succeed McGeorge Bundy, former national security adviser to President Lyndon Johnson. Mr. Bundy has been foundation president for 13 years.

The Ford Foundation has spent more than \$5 billion in grants over the years to 7,000 institutions and groups and more than 100,000 individuals in the United States and 96 foreign countries.

The foundation grew to national and international dimensions from 1950, after the estates of Henry Ford, his wife and Edsel Ford were settled.

It has become involved in building social infrastructure such as universities in foreign countries and recently started focussing on rural development in India, the Far East and Africa.

It has also sent an exploratory mission to China. Among the topics dealt with by its domestic divisions have been environmental questions, energy and urban problems.

The announcement said Mr. Thomas was "eminently qualified to lead in shaping foundation programmes in the important years ahead."

Nixon's White House invitation attests to 'key role' in China

WASHINGTON, Jan. 30 (R) — Richard Nixon returned to the White House last night for the first time since he left it in disgrace four and a half years ago.

The former president was a guest at a state banquet given by President Carter for China's Senior Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping and which, in a sense, was a tribute to Mr. Nixon's role as the architect of America's new China policy.

Mr. Nixon had little to say to reporters, even though the banquet was a climax to his own historic 1972 visit to China which paved the way to the opening of

normal Sino-American relations and Mr. Deng's presence in the White House.

Mr. Nixon was invited to join the president and the vice premier for a private talk before the banquet, said he did not see Mr. Deng in Peking in 1972 and had never met him before. Mr. Nixon said he would meet Mr. Deng privately tomorrow.

Mr. Carter said recently, in answer to criticism, that the invitation to Mr. Nixon was a proper and honourable course because of his key role in the opening of relations with China.

South Africa: Where to draw the line?

Many big companies are pulling out of South Africa, mainly for commercial reasons. But also for commercial reasons, there is a limit to how far this disengagement can go before it begins to hurt the West as well as South Africa.

By Lorne Bunting

Israel, a major South African trading partner, have been cut off.

Although South Africa is believed to have strategic oil stocks which could last up to three years and also produces some oil from coal, the country may have to rely on the spot market for supplies, which are likely to cost at least 30 per cent more than previously. And the longer the Iranian stoppage continues, the higher spot prices are likely to be.

South Africa is also known to receive oil supplies from other

sources including minor oil producers, but it is clear that domestic transport and production costs will increase, with consequent pressure on company profitability.

At a time when South Africa is already facing an economic slowdown and a fall in both domestic and foreign investment, the oil problem and continuing pressure for economic sanctions are bound to affect the confidence of foreign companies operating there.

The country has also been faced with a net capital outflow of £774m. in the first nine months of last year, compared with £488m. during the whole of the previous year, although its balance of payments position is strongly supported by currently high gold prices.

The attitude of foreign banks to loans for South Africa has hardened considerably in the past 18 months, and there has been a shortage of funds for major long-term projects, although many of them are government backed.

On the other hand, despite political opposition to trade with

South Africa, its export performance in the last financial year was very strong, improving by 20 per cent over the previous year.

It has diversified both its range of exports and the markets in which it sells, perhaps partially in response to the continuing pressure at the United Nations for trade sanctions.

The prospect of even limited sanctions is of particular concern to Britain, which accounts for 60 per cent of all foreign investment in South Africa, amounting to a book value of around £4bn.

The British Department of Trade has already conducted an inquiry into the possible effects of sanctions and asked major trading companies to assess their possible losses, but the results have never been made public.

However, the U.K. South Africa Trade Association recently claimed that as many as 250,000 jobs could be lost in Britain if full sanctions were applied to South Africa. Although this may be an over-estimate, the impact would clearly be devastating.

Much of this U.S. buying reflects the importance of South

Africa to the West as a supplier of essential minerals. It has a glittering array of reserves — 86 per cent of the world's platinum, 83 per cent of chrome ore, 64 per cent of vanadium, 48 per cent of manganese ore and 49 per cent of the gold.

Some of these are essential for the production of high technology weapons and South Africa is well aware that the world's other main repository of these minerals is the Soviet Union.

While substitutes for some of these minerals do exist, it is not clear how quickly the existing technology could be adapted to make their use possible in production.

It is therefore likely that while international market forces may reduce foreign commitment to investment and trade with South Africa, the Western nations will continue to resist pressure for sanctions.

Financial Times
News-Features



Making the best of a hard situation

This picture was taken inside a Khmer refugee camp near the Thai border, where life is being organised with the means available. Children are shown attending an improvised school. (Gamma photo)

More 'boat people' leaving Vietnam?

MANILA, Jan. 30 (R) — More refugees from Vietnam may now be on their way to the outside world with the official sanction of the Hanoi Government. Philipine officials said today.

The Foreign Ministry officials said three vessels may be taking on refugees at Ho Chi Minh City and another could already be at sea.

The officials said they had

reports that the boats at Ho Chi

Minh City were being loaded in accordance with new formal pro-

cedures laid down by the Vietnamese Government.

"If they see the Philippines as the only country which allows them to have temporary asylum, they may all come here," one senior ministry official told Reuters.

He said that concern over such a possibility would mark a meeting tomorrow of a ministry committee dealing with the fate of the Tung An, a ship carrying 2,500 refugees which has been anchored in Man-

ila Bay for more than a month.

The official said the Tung An might now be sent to Hong Kong unless the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) could show there was still a chance of the refugees being taken quickly by other countries.

"If the UNHCR tells us that countries are no longer taking refugees from the ship, then it means we have failed in our appeal to the 19 countries we asked to help," he said.

He said the Hong Kong-owned Tung An, which arrived on Dec. 27 with 2,318 refugees, was given temporary asylum in Manila Bay so that the UNHCR could make arrangements for their speedy resettlement. If no one took the remainder, then the reason for giving the temporary asylum no longer existed, he said.

The ship would then have to proceed to Hong Kong, its scheduled first port of call, which has just allowed 2,700 refugees to land. They came from another vessel, the Huey Fong, which the British colony kept outside its harbour for a month.

Malta still lacks aid, neutrality

ROME, Jan. 30 (R) — Arab and

Western nations are unlikely to

finalise a pact guaranteeing

Malta's neutrality before the last

British troops leave the island on

March 31, well-informed Italian sources said yesterday.

Italy and France, representing

the European Common Market,

have been discussing an agree-

ment with the Libyan Jamahiriya

and Algeria as Malta seeks both

financial aid and guaranteed

neutrality.

Maltese Premier Dom Mintoff

wants some \$76 million annually

to compensate for the closure of

the British bases he himself

ordered, the sources said.

A final declaration under-

writing the Mediterranean island's

neutrality would probably not be

completed by the time Britain's

remaining 1,000 troops left, the

sources added.

A final declaration under-

writing the Mediterranean island's

neutrality would probably not be

completed by the time Britain's

remaining 1,000 troops left, the

sources added.

The leaders held a rally

attended by several hundred people

in, referring to former class

enemies, said the Communist

Party Central Committee earlier

this month had reached a decision

on the question of removing the

designations of landlords and

rich peasants and on the class

status of landlords and rich peasants.

The agency said the "great

majority of landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries and

bad elements" had successfully

reformed themselves.

It said the Central Committee decision had noted that landlords and rich peasants from the pre-1949 days had "undergone

remoulding through manual

labour for two or three decades

and the great majority of them

have become labouring people

who earn their own living."

It said they should now be treated like

any other commune member.

Qualifications for school

enrolment, job allocation, joining

the army, the Communist Youth

League and the party should be

based mainly on the political

behaviour of the persons concerned without discrimination."

Their children should be similarly

treated.

The leaders of six human rights

groups said yesterday they would

continue to fight for more free-

dom in China in spite of a

threatened crackdown on the

more outspoken advocates of

democracy.

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